

Parents of truant students getting sent back to school

By KATHLEEN HOPKINS
STAFF WRITER

An Elizabeth Municipal Court judge has found a new way to address an age-old problem: If parents can't get their kids to go to school, make them go to school with their kids.

Municipal Court Judge Daniel J. Russell has ordered 10 parents to attend Elizabeth High School with their

children as punishment stemming from their children's truancy.

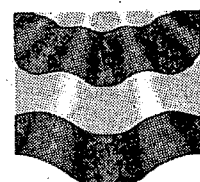
On May 5, seven of the parents were sentenced to serve seven days of community service at Elizabeth High School by accompanying their children to class.

Another three parents were sentenced to accompany their children to class at Elizabeth High School for the remainder of the school year because

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IT'S ALL OVER BUT THE VOTING

The three Democratic candidates brought their campaigns to a close yesterday —



Campaign 1997

each confident that he would walk away with the party's nomination for governor in today's primary election. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. to registered Democrats and Republicans.

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CHIEF CITES LACK OF SAFETY INFORMATION

Firefighters told to avoid toxic site

By SARAH GREENBLATT
STAFF WRITER

The South Plainfield fire chief has ordered firefighters and inspectors not to enter the Hamilton Industrial Park — a federal Superfund site — unless there is no other way to extinguish a fire there.

Fire personnel must remain on the property's perimeter when responding to routine calls, according to the order issued April 18.

They also must leave vehicles and equip-

ment on adjacent streets or on paved sections of the property.

Fire Chief Joe Abbruzzese said yesterday that he issued the order because of unanswered questions about contamination at the site, which is located on Hamilton Boulevard near Spicer Avenue.

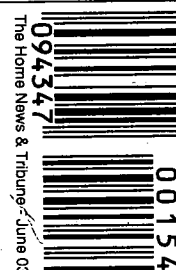
The order came about two weeks after the public learned that the federal Environmental Protection Agency had targeted the 25-acre site for Superfund cleanup.

As a result of that order, members of the

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‘We’re going to err on the side of safety until somebody tells us otherwise.’

Fire Chief Joe Abbruzzese ORDERED FIRE-FIGHTERS NOT TO ENTER PCB-TAINTED INDUSTRIAL PARK



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Weather

More rain:
Temperatures in the upper 50s; rain ending tonight.
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ORDER: Chief tells firefighters to avoid PCB-tainted site

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volunteer fire department stood on Spicer Avenue and used high-powered hoses to fight a recent brush fire in the industrial park.

Abbruzzese said he has tried in vain to learn about needed precautions for handling emergencies at the site, where high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls — or PCBs — have been found.

"How is that going to affect our health?" asked Abbruzzese, who was appointed April 10 to fill the unexpired term of former Fire Chief John Mocharski. "We're going to err on the side of safety until somebody tells us otherwise."

Some of the 15 businesses on the property include warehouses, a moving and storage operation, and manufacturers of cabinets, tools and equipment, as well as a plumbing company and a trucking firm. Several dozen people work in those businesses.

Abbruzzese, who heads an all-vol-

unteer force of 42 firefighters, said he has been "stonewalled" in his efforts to find out from the EPA how or whether emergency operations might be affected by contamination at the site.

Eric Wilson, who is coordinating EPA efforts at the site, said that as of yesterday he had not received any requests for information from borough fire officials.

The chief's order also directs his staff to summon the Middlesex County Hazardous Materials Unit if they need to enter the property.

Fire trucks and other equipment that go on the property must be decontaminated before returning to the borough fire station, according to the order.

Abbruzzese also ordered firefighters at the site to wear breathing apparatus. Usually worn only when there is heavy smoke, the breathing gear also is used when toxic substances may be present.

Fire officials will not inspect any buildings on the site until the department receives guidance on needed

precautions, Abbruzzese said.

Abbruzzese said the orders apply to "run of the mill" calls, such as those generated by automatic fire alarms.

He said businesses at the site "have a pretty good record of fire safety," and that there have been no working fires on the property for five to seven years.

"I may be criticized for overdoing it," the chief said. "I'll take that criticism and err to the side of safety."

Mayor Daniel Gallagher said he supports the chief's position, at least until more information has been received.

"We're a little reluctant to bring in manpower," Gallagher said. "Certainly, if there's a working fire, we'll take care of it... we will fight fires."

Business owners and managers at the site expressed a range of opinions yesterday afternoon about the new policy.

"I can't see how they could consider it," said Mike Naylor, manager of Hope International, a warehouse located at the site.

"That blows my mind," said A.J. Di-

said.

Lello, owner of Robalo Enterprises, a warehouse and distribution business also located in the industrial park. "But I'd rather be safe than sorry, so I'm sure they have the same attitude."

The EPA will issue recommendations within the next two days for responding to emergency calls on the property, Wilson said.

He said he could not discuss those recommendations or comment on the chief's orders.

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THE HOME NEWS & TRIBUNE

Vol. 2, No. 204 June 3, 1997

NEWS/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATION 908-246-5500, 800-627-4663

CLASSIFIED 908-246-3000, 800-234-2527

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

35 Kennedy Blvd., P.O. Box 1049,
East Brunswick, N.J. 08816

Published daily and Sunday by Asbury Park Press, Inc.

©1996 Asbury Park Press

USPS 143-200, Second

class postage paid at

Neptune, N.J. 07754

Our circulation customer

service department is

open from 6 a.m. to 5

p.m. Monday-Friday and

6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday

and Sunday.

If you do not receive

your paper by 7 a.m.

Monday-Friday or by 8

a.m. Saturday-Sunday,

please call the applicable

circulation number

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